the Kausar and Rashakai areas

been targeting militant positions in

Bajaur, a major operation that has

seen nearly 700 people killed,

mostly militants, and 260,000 dis-

guerrilla leader Gulbuddin

Hekmatyar, has previously con-

ducted operations against Afghan

and international forces based

across the border in Afghanistan,

residents and a security official said.

minister of Afghanistan in the 1990s

after the end of its Soviet occupa-

the regime was removed from

power following the US-led inva-

sion of the country in 2001, after the

September 11 attacks in the United

States, and has demanded the

Missile strikes targeting mili-

tants in Pakistan in recent weeks

have been blamed on US-led coali-

tion forces or CIA drones based in

Afghanistan. Pakistan does not have

women and children, have been

killed in the past week's missile

Thirty-eight people, including

Pakistan and the United States

have been drawn into a row over the

withdrawal of foreign forces.

missile-equipped drones.

Hekmatyar was briefly prime

He has backed the Taliban since

Al Badar, backed by former

Pakistani forces have for weeks

earlier in the day, Khattak said.

BNP set to reunify

even before Khaleda's arrest on

Khaleda expelled Bhuiyan from the party appointing Khandaker Delwar Hossain as the secretary general in his

"We had a cordial talk with Madam," Mahbub told The Daily Star last night and hoped that the party will be reunited under the leadership of the chairperson, who was released from detention more than a year into

from us while we also informed her about the latest political situation," he

Maj (retd) Hafizuddin Ahmed, who was also very vocal for 'reforms', gave in to Khaleda's leadership yester-

Khaleda will preside over today's office in Naya Paltan of the capital at 3:00pm. The meeting will be the first of its kind since January last year.

Sources in BNP said the meeting will discuss the government's

committee will meet today as Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan is still expelled from the party and two other members Moudud Ahmed and Khandaker tion, while three other posts have been

in the meeting," Lt Gen (retd) Mahbubur Rahman told The Daily

He said dialogues with the EC and the upcoming elections will also be discussed, adding he was asked to

party became very active after Khaleda's arrest. They organised a controversial meeting of the policymaking standing committee in Saifur's residence on October 29 last year where the former finance minister was nominated as the acting chairman of the party while Hafizuddin was nominated as the acting secretary general, bypassing Khaleda and her appointed secretary general Delwar, and sparking the factional feud.

Seven out of 12 members of the standing committee were present in that meeting

The move split BNP in two, with Delwar-led faction taking the EC to court after the commission had invited Hafizuddin to the electoral dialogues in a letter addressing him as the acting secretary general.

Hannan Shah at the forefront, apparently leading yet another faction, BNP, one of the largest political parties in the county, found itself in a very precarious position.

Before leaving the country for treatment on May 7 this year, Saifur suddenly relinquished the leadership of his own faction, signalling fading of the influence of so-called reformist

Now, Maj Hafizuddin also thinks that the October 29 decision of the controversial standing committee meeting was wrong.

and his followers finally came to accept the leadership of Khaleda nominated secretary general.

Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan also hailed Khaleda's release and is expected to get reinstated in the party soon. His fate in the party will be discussed in today's meeting.

"The issue of Mannan Bhuiyan will be a crucial agendum in the meeting," said a senior BNP leader, on condition of anonymity

Talking to reporters in his residence, Bhuiyan expressed his elation over Khaleda's release. "The people were expecting her release. I express my gratitude to the almighty for her release, which will make the party stronger," he said.

Four lawyers of Khaleda also met her yesterday. Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, who was parliamentary affairs adviser to Khaleda during her last premiership, also mether.

Apart from the meetings, she also talked to many party leaders and well wishers who called her from many places in the country and from abroad," said one of Khaleda's law-

After being released, Khaleda returned to her Shaheed Moinul Road residence in Dhaka Cantonment on Thursday night from where she had been arrested by the joint forces more than a year ago.

The BNP chief also talked to her sons Tarique Rahman and Arafat Rahman Koko over the phone and enquired about their health condi-

Tarique, who was released on bail on September 3, left the country on Thursday. He is expected to be admitted to a hospital in London soon. Koko is now undergoing treatment

Khaleda and her sons are facing a number of corruption and extortion

Fazle Abed

FROM PAGE 1

prestigious award of the Synergo institute.

The award will be given on September 23 in New York at an event called "University for a Night" a unique annual gathering of leaders from business, government, civil

society and philanthropy. Synergos confers the David Rockefeller Bridging Leadership Award each year on persons and organisations who exemplify "what the evening stands for --working together for the common good" by showing vision and courage in bringing people together to address he most critical issues.

The first such honouree was David Rockefeller, for whom the award is named

Last year, the award went to former South Africa president Nelson Mandela and Bill Gates, Melinda French Gates and William H Gates Sr, co-chairs of Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The Synergos is an independent non-profit organisation dedicated to the development of effective, sustainable and locally-based solutions to poverty. Working with its partners, Synergos mobilise resources and bridge social and economic divides to reduce poverty and increase equity around the

bought green chillies at Tk 50 a kg, imported onions at Tk 22 and a fivelitre jerrycan of soya bean oil for Tk

When told about the wholesale prices of these items, he said he did not know that the prices had gone down so much.

> Retailers say that they cannot reduce the prices now as most of the products they are selling were pur-

> jerrycans of soya bean oil at Tk 569 each. So far I have sold only four of them at Tk 580 each. In the meantime, the price dropped to Tk 519 and now I cannot sell without incurring loss," a trader at East Rajabazar said.

> Prices of battery-chicken dropped by Tk 10-15 per kg in wholesale markets but it went down only by Tk5-10 in retail.

however, the drop was only Tk 3-6.

Eggs were selling for Tk 50-54 a dozen in wholesale yesterday. In retail markets, it was Tk 60-70.

onlyTk2-3

The price of chickpeas dropped by Tk 2 a kg in wholesale without | the agriculture extension departhaving any impact on the retail

Aubergine prices marked a drop by Tk 15-20 per kg in wholesale during the last week.

In retail, the price dropped by Tk 10. Aubergine was selling between Tk 35 and Tk 60 per kg yesterday.

Senpara Parbata

FROM PAGE 16

"We have already submitted a proposal ofTk1.5crorebutwemaygetTk70lakh torepairtheroads," hesaid.

Speaking anonymously, an executive engineer of Zone-7 admitted the poor states of the roads. He said they have already submitted a proposal of Tk 8.5 crore to repair the roads under wards 9, 10, 11, 12, 1314, 16 and 41.

Each of the wards will get Tk 1 crore on an average for the repair, he said. "If we get the green signal from the authorities, we will invite for tenders for thework, headded.

Travel chaos

FROM PAGE 16 a letter telling us what had happened," said Julian Castle, who with his wife Marion had booked flights with XL for a two-week holiday in Florida.

"We've been queuing up for about two hours and have been told we can get other flights but we'll have to pay 695 pounds (870 euros, 1,230 dollars) each," he added.

Administrators have been called in to see whether the company can be saved from total bankruptcy.

Britain's Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) said the XL collapse was probably the biggest holiday opera tor failure for 20 years. The company had operated flights to more than 50 destinations in Europe, the United States and Africa.

The CAA said it would bring back people already on holiday who had been left without return flights.

Customers queuing at Gatwick --XL's main departure point for package holidays -- had no idea of XL's collapse until they were informed by airport officials.

Graham White, 27, an estate agent from London, said: "We didn't find out about it until we got here. I'm pretty annoyed."

Meanwhile there were similar frustrations at London's St Pancras station, the British terminus for trains travelling through the Channel Tunnel to France and Belgium.

"I heard the announcement in the Tube this morning that there was no service. When I heard it I didn't believe it," said Lithuanian Katia Nazmutdinova, 25, who was planning to travel to Paris for a trade

"They don't know if the service will be available tomorrow but the thing is, even if I come tomorrow I don't think I'm going to be able to use their train because I think all the tickets will be sold out."

The fire erupted Thursday afternoon on a freight train about five kilometres (three miles) from the French end of the tunnel, forcing the evacuation of some 30 people, mostly truckers.

While the blaze was rapidly brought under control, British and French firefighters battled all night to finally extinguish it.

Many passengers were forced to spend an extra night in London or Paris Thursday as flights between the two cities quickly became fully booked, while ferries were also in heavy demand.

To help matters, some bus services in London were facing disruption due to a strike by drivers and other staff over a pay row. Members of Unite union at firms

run by the First transport group were on strike for 48 hours, affecting buses in the east and the west of the British capital.

Rab deployed

FROM PAGE 16

launch terminal within a few days. Rab officials said similar steps will be taken at Mohakhali bus terminal after ramadan 15 when many will start leaving the capital for home.

Meanwhile, passengers a Sayedabad bus terminal said transport workers tugged at their luggage in a bid to get them into buses. But the transport workers showed restraints after Rab members were deployed at the terminal.

The passengers said traffic jam occurs regularly at the terminal gate as the drivers stop buses there to get passengers.

"If we receive any allegations of collecting extra fares or passenger harassment we shall take tough actions against the persons responsible," said In-charge of the Rab control room Deputy Assistant Director Azizur Rahman.

Bus drivers yesterday refrained from waiting at the terminal gate after the deployment of Rab mem-

Nurul Islam, a bus driver, said, "We stop buses at the terminal gate, for around 10 minutes to get passengers. Now our income has dropped as we are not allowed to stop buses at the gate."

Asked whether they have to pay extortion money to criminals or nalists had been waiting at the airtransport association leaders, Nurul said such practices stopped after the present caretaker government took over.

Aman targets

FROM PAGE 1 waterlogged in Sirajganj, destroying the prospect of about 2,500 tonnes of rice.

Khandaker Hasibur Rahman, The BNP leaders have talked to ment's deputy director in the district, estimated the loss at Tk three to four private hospitals in London for Tarique's treatment. 7.50 crore. "They have told me that local

RMC closed

FROM PAGE 1 Rashedul Islam, Sourav Das, Harun-ur-Rashid, Zakaria Habib, Kamruzzaman, Zahedul Islam,

Sohel and Manjurul Karim. Meanwhile, the Rajshahi University (RU) Syndicate at its meeting on Thursday night decided to reopen the university on October 12.

Earlier on August 20, the RU authorities closed the university for an indefinite period following a violent clash between the students and local traders that left 60 people, including teachers, students and policemen, injured.

The RU residential halls will reopen on October 11, sources

Khaleda agrees to drop

FROM PAGE 1 ensure post-election stability.

Commerce and Education Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman led the advisers to the talks that began at 9:30pm. The other members of the delegation were LGRD Adviser Anwarul Iqbal, Communications Adviser Ghulam Quader and Law adviser Hassan Ariff.

During over two-hour meeting, Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed called Khaleda and briefed her about the overall goals of his government. The conversation lasted 10 Zillur said the BNP chief asked

Fakhruddin to withdraw the state of

emergency without delay and hold

the ninth parliamentary election before upazila polls. The CA and the BNP chairperson agreed to work in unison towards a peaceful and credible national

election by December, he added. Later, at a news briefing at an Old DOHS community centre, the advisers said they discussed a num-

ber of issues including the possibility of formal talks between the government and BNP and ways to ensure a level playing field for the general election.

"We've formally invited her [Khaleda] to dialogue with the government. She has consented to sit as soon as possible," Hossain Zillur said, adding that the talks would be held by Sunday.

After the discussions, Khaleda entertained the advisers.

All major political parties except BNP and its ally Jamaat-e-Islami have had discussions with the government on electoral and other

The BNP laid down conditions that the government must release Khaleda and her sons in order for the dialogue to take place. Zillur said the recent develop-

ments have led to a mood of opti-

mism among people. "We have talked about how to get rid of those who have brought poli-

tics into disrepute," added the

transfers, Waheedur went on add

which currently employ around 18

relax it for the purpose of the elec-

The CA said China is a ver

important development partner of

lakh Bangladeshi expatriates.

CA on polls

tion as much as necessary."

FROM PAGE 16

nurses," he said.

Replying to a query, he said they were working to get Hasina and Khaleda to sit down and discuss ways to take the country forward.

He quoted Khaleda as saying, "There could be competition between political parties, but they must cooperate with the government in the interests of the country."

Heads of BNP and AL have not met and talked to each other for more than a decade, and many consider the bitter relations between the two as main obstacle to political stability in the country. Asked if Khaleda would be able

to contest the election, Zillur replied, "It's a premature question. The Election Commission is the authority to deal with the issue." Earlier on June 11, advisers held

talks with Hasina at her Sudha Sadan residence in Dhanmondi, hours after her release on executive orders. During that meeting too the CA called the AL chief.

Thai ruling party Saudi ban on visas ROM PAGE 16

children back to Bangladesh. "The embassy receives several party spokesman Kuthep Saikrajang. The Nation newspaper, quoting an unidentified source, said on its Web job categories such as doctors and

draw from the race and might even Thousands of Bangladeshi quit the party. workers were denied sponsorship party as a liability.

ing the embassy took up the matter with the Saudi Ministry of Foreign He is the focus of massive protests Affairs and was awaiting by an anti-government group, the People's Alliance for Democracy, whose occupation of the Government The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is House has increased fears of instabilthe largest foreign employer o immigrant Bangladeshi workers

Minister Surapong Seubwonglee.

He did not say when the party will decide on the final candidate to contest the vote in Parliament. There was also no immediate word from the Samak

the media, has become one of the most divisive characters in Thai His troubles began soon after he took office in February when the

People's Alliance for Democracy China's contribution to the manipulating illiterate rural voters. infrastructure sector is evident, he

House on Aug. 26. They say they will not leave until it is clear that Samak or his cronies will not return to office. They did not immediately comment on the latest

Somchai, the acting prime minisminister's office.

of disgraced former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was ousted in a military coup following massive street protests they led in 2006. It was Thailand's 18th coup since the counchyin 1932.

lawmakers in the 480-seat Parliament, but 10 are disqualified from voting, leaving it 18 short of a majority. The other five parties in the coalition control 83 seats, while the opposition Democrat Party has 164

The parliament tried to convene earlier Friday to elect Samak's replacement but had to be adjourned after the session was boycotted by the coalition

Abhisit Vejjajiva said "it's time to get the country out of its crisis, and to do that we need leaders with a fresh attitude."

FROM PAGE 1 Panchbibi upazila in Joypurhat that left an Indian national wounded. The injured was identified as

Babu Mondal, 32, son of Kayam Uddin of Dumuril under Hili of South Dinajpur, India. Officials of BDR 29 Battalion said

received severe bullets injuries. Doctors said he was in a critical condition. BDR officials said BSF personnel of 89 Mathurapur camp fired at least 10 bullets towards Bangladesh territory without provocation. They claimed this left Babu injured as he was working on his cropland 400 metres inside Indian territory. BDR

officials said injured Babu came into

Bangladesh territory fearing more

gunfire from BSF and seeking cover. BDR retaliated and fired three bullets into Indian territory.

BSF returned the body of a Bangladesh national Thursday afternoon, a correspondent from Thakurgaon reports.

Haque of Chandail under Haripur upazila in Thakurgaon, was gunned down by BSF personnel early Wednesdayat Haripur.

meeting of company commanders of BDR and BSF, BDR Deputy Commander Major Munir said. Later, BDR handed the body over to the victim's family.

local government official Iqbal General Ashfaq Kayani this week Khattak told AFP. strongly criticising them and insist-Separately eight militants were troops to conduct them. killed when Pakistan army tanks and artillery targeted their positions in

Suspected US missile

ing no deal existed to allow foreign As well as missile strikes, Pakistan last week for the first time accused Afghanistan-based troops of carrying out a direct attack on its territory, a raid in the South

strikes, with Pakistan army chief

Waziristan tribal zone that left 15 people dead. US and Afghan officials say Pakistan's tribal areas are a safe haven for al-Qaeda and Taliban militants who sneaked into the rugged region after the fall of the

Taliban regime in late 2001. al-Qaeda chief Osama bin laden and his deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri, are widely believed to be hiding in the mountainous region.

A separate strike in North Waziristan on Monday targeted but failed to hit top Taliban commander Jalaluddin Haqqani, but did kill four mid-level al-Qaeda operatives, a security official and a militant source said.

With tens of thousands of US and other international troops locked down in Afghanistan, US Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Admiral Michael Mullen said Wednesday he had ordered a new strategy covering both sides of the border with Pakistan.

The New York Times also reported that US President George W. Bush in July secretly approved orders enabling Special Operations forces to conduct ground operations in Pakistan without Islamabad's prior approval.

Record success

"I congratulate the students on their success. But I think this is merely a quantitative change, not a qualitative one. Because, I have come to know that examiners were asked to give more marks than they would normally give," said eminent academician and writer Prof Muhammad Zafar Igbal

Giving such instructions (for more marks) could be considered by a political government for cheap popularity, but I have no idea why a caretaker government should do this. It is a sort of cheating with the nation," said Zafar Iqbal, professor of Computer Science and Engineering at Shah Jalal University, Sylhet. Contacted, Benjamin Costa,

principal of Notre Dame College, said the record pass rate this year does not necessarily reflect overall improvement of quality of education in the country. "It is bad if any instructions are given to check exam- 10 given 1 visions and of surrounds ination papers liberally," he added. Besides, parents and guardians

are now more aware of the importance of investing in education of their children. And this is likely to improve their performance in examinations, the principal said.

He noted that teachers' training and designing questions that require

more analytical and creative capabilities of students should get emphasis, but that has not happened in Bangladesh.

Serajul Islam Choudhury said giving such instructions, if any, especially in case of public examinations, is not "It is true that in developed countries, examiners check exam papers liberally, but that is not the case in our country. Change of attitude requires

Renowned educationist Prof

teachers. Any directive in this regard is not desirable," he said. Principal of Vigarunnisa Noon School and College Rokeya Akhter appeared skeptical of the claim that the HSC results this year showed a

time and adequate training among

qualitative change in education. She however said there were instructions to examiners, which meant in case of fully correct answers to questions, full marks should be "Traditionally, it is observed that

examiners give marks a bit miserly. I

think they tried to check papers

accurately this year and that might have contributed to better results. Rokeya Akhter also said comparatively good academic atmosphere last year was another major factor

Jalil's past stand

of her mind what he wrote in his petition and that too at a time when the organisation was in a critical

Jalil's petition to Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed was scathing about the AL chief. He said she runs the party like a dictator. No-one dares to go against her dictates.

The former commerce minister also observed that "Hasina doesn't bother to pay heed to others and it oftentimes proves disastrous for the party". Asked if Hasina had insisted on

Ashraf's carrying on as the acting

general secretary, AL acting president Zillur Rahman yesterday said, "The decision has been taken through discussions among us." Jalil returned home on August 31 after a six months' stay in Singapore for treatment. After the

High Court granted him a 40-day ad interim bail Wednesday, he said he would be back to his position. Sources said Jalil made the move after an influential presidium member had suggested that he stake his claim as the AL general

secretary, or else he might lose the "He should not have followed the suggestion that I think was an ill-advice. It was indeed foolhardy for him to ignore the party chief's request to take rest," another

anonymity. Meanwhile, AL insiders said the party will hold a presidium meeting within a couple of days. After the meeting, it would come up with a formal announcement about the

If its efforts succeed, Jalil might announce at a news briefing that he is not assuming charge as general secretary for health reasons, and that Ashraf would continue to stand in for him.

Speaking to journalists at his Gulshan residence yesterday morning, Zillur Rahman said, "A decision whether Jalil will be reinstated as general secretary will be made after the leader [Hasina] returns home." He said, "We are happy he has

returned among us. It's only on technical grounds that he has yet to be given back the role as general secretary. Asked about Jalil's statement that as per the AL constitution he is the general secretary, the acting AL

chief said, "He spoke about the constitution without fully understanding it." Queried what he meant by 'technical grounds', Zillur said,

circumstances. The matter has not been resolved yet, and he won't be

given the charge until there's a

resolution.' Later, asked about Zillur's statement, Jalil said, "I won't say anything in this regard." Similarly, most of the senior

leaders refrained from making any comments. Jalil in his petition to the government in wrote, "For my grave health condition and looking at the faces of my family and the dear little sons. I have decided to retire from politics if necessary. I humbly request you [the government] not to extend my detention and release

me on humanitarian grounds." Asked if the party might be affected adversely for the latest developments regarding Jalil and Ashraf, Zillur said, "We have not left Jalil. He is still with us. CITYAL PRESS CONFERENCE

Dhaka city AL at a press conference

at the party headquarters on Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday demanded immediate withdrawal of all "false" charges against Hasina and other leaders who have been either detained or on the run. The government has no right to keep anyone detained after release

of Tarique Rahman, observed city AL acting general secretary Quamrul Islam Reading out a statement, he also demanded lifting of the state of emergency and announcement of

parliamentary polls schedule. He said they would launch a strong movement if the government attempts to hold upazila polls before the national election.

Diofuel pioingi

FROM PAGE 16 While oil firms now buy ethanol at Rs 21.50 per litre, non-edible oil for diesel mixing would be purchased at a price

linked to prevailing diesel price. The policy calls for scrapping taxes and duties on bio-diesel and declared goods status being conferred on bio-diesel and bioethanol. Declared goods status would mean that the two would attract a uniform central sales tax or VAT rate rather than varied sales

Biofuel Development Board, as had been recommended by a Group of Ministers headed by Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar, the Cabinet constituted a National Biofuel Coordination Committee headed

Blending should go through certain protocol and certifications, for which the industry and OMCs should jointly set-up an appropriate mechanism and the required facilities, the statement said

"There is no dispute about her leadership. BNP was united under the leadership of Khaleda Zia and it will September3lastyear. Minutes before being arrested remain so," Hafiz told reporters in his residence yesterday, adding that he

her arrest. "She wanted to know many things

day as well, by recognising Delwar as the party's secretary general. standing committee meeting scheduled to be held in the party's central

planned move to bring two former premiers, Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina to a table, who are known to be political archrivals, and both of whom were detained by the military backed caretaker government on several graft Nine of the 15-member standing

Mosharraf Hossain are still in detenvacant for a long time. "The organisational state of the party, the country's latest political situation, reforms, and divisions in the party are expected to be discussed

attend the meeting today. The so-called reformists in the

Soon with the emergence of

Prices of imported onions, green chillies, ginger and edible oil have marked a sharp fall in wholesale markets during the last week. Prices of other items like puffed-rice, chickpeas, battery-chicken, eggs and

aubergines also dropped. However, retail prices of these items did not come down in accordance with the wholesale prices. Prices of imported onions went down by Tk 7-10 per kg in wholesale

markets. It was being sold for Tk 11-

17 a kg y esterday.

In retail, however, these onions were selling for Tk 20-25 a kg. Last week the price was between Tk 25 andTk28 Onion wholesaler Idris Ahmed of Shyambazar told The Daily Star that last week a large quantity of imported

Over 30,000 tonnes of onions arrived last week which is three times the demand. I do not have sufficient space to store them. I can only sell 15 tonnes a day at best," he said. "Onions are rotting due to heat

and we are selling those at Tk 5-8 a

onions arrived at the market drop-

ping prices by over supply.

kg," he said. Prices of local onions have also come down by Tk 2 per kg in retail. They are now selling for Tk 30-34 a kg. Prices of green chillies came down by Tk 40-45 per kg in wholesale during the last week. Green chillies were selling at Tk 24-26 a kg at Karwan Bazar yesterday afternoon.

at Tk 40-60 a kg yesterday. It was selling between Tk 80 and Tk 100 a kg a week ago. Prices of ginger came down by Tk 12-18 per kg in wholesale markets. Ginger was selling at Tk 30-60 a kg yesterday; it was Tk 42-78 a week ago. In retail, ginger was selling between Tk 45 and Tk 90 per kg yesterday. A week ago the price was

between Tk 50 and Tk 100.

perlitre.

In retail, green chillies were selling

A wholesale ginger trader in Karwan Bazar said newly harvested ginger was selling for Tk 30 a kg and the imported ones and the old ones were selling for Tk 60 a kgyesterday. Even though prices of branded soya bean oil were reduced by Tk 10 per litre, retailers reduced only Tk 1-5

A five-litre jerrycan of soya bean oil was selling between Tk 550 and Tk 580 yesterday; it was between Tk 575 and Tk 590 three days ago. Jainal Abedin told The Daily Star yesterday at Karwan Bazar that he

Prices of essentials

Market sources said retailers are taking advantage of lack of market

chase weeks ago at higher prices. "Last week, I bought 10 [five-litre]

In wholesale, the price of eggs went down by Tk 10-12 per dozen during the last week. In retail market,

In wholesale, the price of puffed rice came down by Tk 5 per kg during the last week but retailers reduced

markets, market sources said.

"We are expecting to start the repair in October"

calls everyday from our workers about the refusal to allow sponsor ship transfers even in professional

A huge number of Bangladeshi schoolchildren, who are about to turn 18, are facing possible deportation, the agent said.

FROM PAGE 1

ing agent said.

this year.

"This is a big problem facing Bangladeshi families living in the kingdom," he added saying the problem is acute for doctors, engineers and accountants, who could afford to bring their children to Saudi immigration rule states

that children of immigrant workers

may stay in the kingdom on sepa-

rate residency permits after turning 18, but their parents must sponsor them. Negative media coverage about Bangladeshis being involved in criminal activities there might be a reason for the backlash, the recruit-

Corruption', campaigning to stop recruiting Bangladeshi workers. The website in Arabic attracted more than 80,000 hits in two weeks, Arab News reported on February 12

The launch of the website was

prompted by an increase in the

A group of Saudis already

launched a website titled 'No to

number of crimes committed by Bangladeshis there, said one of the initiators of the campaign. Experts however said singling out any particular nationality for punishment for crimes that can be committed by anyone anywhere, is

neither rational nor acceptable. While Bangladeshi workers in job categories other than domestic and agricultural are continuing to arrive in the kingdom, stay of those already there including doctors and nurses is getting uncertain as they are being denied transfers of sponsorship, and their children aged 18 and over are being denied renewal of residency permits,

When parents are applying for

renewal of residency permits for

their children aged 18 years and

over, the authorities are not giving

extensions, he added saying sev-

eral families had to send their

Waheedur said.

accompanying him.

Bangladesh as bilateral cooperation has been expanded in many fields. He expected that his visit would further strengthen the

cordial friendship between the two

countries. "China has been assisting us in economic growth," said the CA who is going to attend the closing Sceremorty of Beijing Para Olympic and to meet Chinese President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao.

said, noting the six friendship bridges and the Bangladesh-China friendship Conference Centre in The CA expected closer economic cooperation with China and more Chinese investment. "I hope my visit will strengthen economic cooperation in different fields and trade between the two countries,

and improve and increase Chinese investment in Bangladesh," he said. "We've been good friends and we'll continue to remain good friends in the future and let the bonds of friendship flourish in the

Tarique in London FROM PAGE 1 treatment after release. Syed Shafiuzzaman, and physician He was to fly out Wednesday Dr Kazi Mazharul Islam Dolon were

family sources.

Tarique had an injection to relieve the backache that had dogged him throughout his 18-month detention on graft charges.

He was expected to be admitted

During the stopover in Dubai,

to a London hospital last night or BNP's UK chapter chief Kamar Uddin and some 100 leaders and workers gathered at Gatwick to welcome Tarique and his family. Besides, a large number of jour-

port, but failed to get up close to Tarique, Syed Nahas Pasha, editorin-chief of London-based Bangla weekly Janamat, told The Daily Star overphone. He added that BNP leaders there

were staying mum about precise

location of the house where Tarique

is staying. "He was exhausted by the long, journey from Dhaka to London, Pasha quoted UK BNP's Genera Secretary Abdul Malek as saying.

and on assessment of his health condition they will decide on a hospital he should be taken to," the Janamat editor said. He might be hospitalised sometime after the weekend, he said quoting a top BNP leader in the UK

Sources close to Tarique's family

in Dhaka said he might be admitted

to Hammersmith or King's Oak

tearful send-off at the Bangabandhu

Sheikh Mujib Medical University

Hospital where he had been under

consultants will check Tarique today,

Amin and his followers were involved in the incident. He said Tarique was freed on September 3 Chhatra Dal would take immediate after securing bail from the High Court in all 13 cases filed on corruporganisational measures against tion and extortion charges. His mother who too stands accused of graft was freed on bail the day he left The BNP chief gave his son a

future," The CA said.

He was detained on March 7 last year as part of the present militarybacked administration's clampdown on graft suspects. His mother and younger brother Arafat Rahman Koko were arrested

night, but the departure was

rescheduled as his mother had

wanted to bid him goodbye, said

Koko, who was released on July 17 also on health grounds, is receiving treatment from Bumrungrad International Hospital in Bangkok for respiratory complications.

ICD men

on September 3 the same year.

Amin. The Chhatra Dal cadres suddenly attacked us," said Habib, a student of mass communication and journalism department. Later in the afternoon, students of mass communication and jour nalism department held a press conference at Madhur Canteen demanding exemplary punish-

ment for Chhatra Dal cadres who

attacked them. They also

demanded immediate expulsion of

Amin and the Chhatra Dal cadres

The students will stage demon-

from the university.

Chhatra Dal, we did not even know

strations on the campus and submit a memorandum before the DU Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz today. They will hold a solidarity rally comprising teachers, intellectuals, journalists, lawyers and students Tuesday. DU Chhatra Dal President Hasan Mamun told reporters that

the people responsible. DU Proctor Prof AK Firoz Ahmed told The Daily Star that filming of any kind is illegal on campus if it is without permission. The university authorities would certainly take strict actions against the people responsible, he added.

"We have come to a resolution that since the coalition partners and some of the party members do not agree with appointing Samak" the party would have to pick someone else, said

The surprise decision was a clear sign that Samak is seen by the ruling

site that Samak had agreed to with-

ity, economic chaos and even a mili Kuthep said the party has shortlisted three candidates to replace Samak acting Prime Minister Somchai Wongsawat, Justice Minister Sompong Amornwiwat and Finance

coalition partners but they are likely to accept anyone as long as it was not Samak, a coarse politician who has antagonized virtually every Thai institution including the military and

made up of the urban elite began protesting his appointment, saying he won the December election by Thousands of alliance members stormed and occupied the Government

ter, said a state of emergency in Bangkok will not be lifted until the protesters leave the Government House, which houses the prime The protesters call Samak a pawn

try became a constitutional monar-The People's Power Party has 233

Opposition Democrat Party leader

BSF kills one

senior AL leader said, seeking a BDR patrol team rushed Babu to Joypurhat Sadar Hospital as he

Major Shamim of 29 Battalion said BDR protested the unprovoked firing of BSF and beefed up its patrol at different places following the incident.

Rashidul, 37, son of late Samsul The body was returned after a flag

> "Jalil had resigned his position as general secretary under special

tax rates prevalent in states. Instead of setting up a National

by the Prime Minister.